

FOLK LORE OF THE UNITED STATES
MARINE CORPS

by
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The United States Marine Corps for one hundred and eighty-seven years has been known as the roughest, toughest, most destructive group of fighting men in the world. This basic premise is taught to every young Marine recruit. Because he believes this premise, he soon develops a sense of group pride unlike that found in any other organization anywhere.

There are literally thousands of reasons for a Marine's belief that he and his organization are the very best. In this paper, I hope to point out a few of these reasons.

The building of pride within the unit and confidence within the individual is a tremendous task when one considers that in just twelve weeks from the day a young recruit reports for training, he leaves a fully trained Marine ready to fight in any part of the world. The training is concentrated, tough, and consistent from one recruit platoon to the next. It is beyond the scope of this paper to relate all the aspects of such training, but the examples given should give a fairly good insight into why a Marine is so effective as a shock troop. I have heard it said during training that, "we wish to hell a war would break out, it couldn't be this bad." While this statement is an attempt at humor, it nevertheless expresses the Marine Corps' philosophy in training. The philosophy is very simple and vastly effective. "Take the recruit, tear down all his previous ideals, methods, and mores from civilian life and replace them with those of a Marine. Teach him only one trade--how to kill men. Propose seemingly impossible problems for him in order to weed out the dead weight in the group and teach the others confidence and pride in accomplishment. Condition him mentally, physically, and morally with the most rugged kind of training known. Mold, or beat him

if necessary, into the shape you want him. Add to this formula a big portion of tradition, a few laughs, a healthy portion of brotherhood, a few pats on the back and you've got yourself an eighteen year old killer in dress blues. (The average age of the Marine, considering all personnel in the Corps, is eighteen and a half years. The Marine Corps has been called in the past by Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt "An underpaid, oversexed, bunch of teenaged killers." We try our best to live up to our reputation.)

From the above discussion, I have attempted to show how and why a Marine has pride in his unit whether it be on the entire Marine Corps level or the individual platoon level. Because of this pride and sense of belonging, the Marine Corps is one of the most esoteric groups in the world. Because of this sense of esotericness, the lore of the group conforms very well with the patterns of other folk groups. In the Marine Corps, lore and traditional methods are passed on almost purely by word of mouth communication. Since the practices and ideas are consistent from one group to the next within the Corps, and since this is a military organization where rules of conformity are a must, there is very little change in lore from one group to the next.

As a personal observation, I have heard stories, the same stories, told within the same Marine Corps structure, but in many different places by different people without one word changed. I believe that the reason for this is simply that the Marine is required to learn so many things by rote, that the concept carries over even in the folk lore he circulates.

Like other folk groups, the average Marine has no idea that he is passing on folk "literature" when he tells a story, or makes some smart reply. He seems to make no conscious effort to reproduce exactly what he has heard-- it just happens that way. For this and many other reasons, the lore passed along in the Corps is vastly interesting to collect and relate.

Naturally in any group of men, especially in a group of fighting men, the lore is orientated along the lines of the bawdy and the hero image type. While in the Marine Corps I have found practically every category of folk lore studied this semester; they all tend to be channeled down bawdy or hero lines.

Definitions and Terms

Head--the bathroom facilities.

Squad bay--the barracks, houses one platoon.

Platoon--the training unit or fighting unit of 43 men and a second lieutenant. The smallest unit for all practical purposes.

Gunny--a gunnery sergeant in rank.

A recruit--a shit bird, a turd, a shit maggot, a clown.

A woman--a broad, a cunt.

A joint--the penis.

S-2--Battalion level of anything.

G-2--intelligence code number.

Gear--the necessities issued every Marine.

Deck--the floor or the ground.

Bulkhead--the wall.

Hatchway--the door.

Overhead--the ceiling.

Rifle--any weapon with a barrel over 18" in length, never to be called a gun.

Cover--any type of hat or cap.

Boondocks--woods or forest. (shortened to boonies)

Grab ass--any type of goofing off, horseplay.

Blues, Greens, Trops--three types of uniforms.

Utilities--the fighting uniform.

Field day--a clean-up session where everything is scrubbed.

Butt--a cigaret, or the butt of a rifle.

Brass--the brass belt buckle and any other accessories made from brass.

Stacking swivel--the attachment on a rifle which allows it to be stacked.

Drill--that portion of training where discipline and working close together are emphasized.

Gung-ho--A Chinese word meaning work together, usually used as an adjective to describe a good Marine.

Squared away--neat and proper in appearance.

Field scarf--neck tie.

Crud--any type of dirt etc. found on anything.

Passageway--hallway.

Chow--meals.

S.O.S.--shit on a shingle, ground beef and gravy on toast served for breakfast.

Regs--regulations or regular Marines as opposed to reservists.

782 gear--packs, tents, and other field gear.

Webb gear--any gear made of canvass webbing.

Grinder--the parade grounds.

To shit can--to do away with (shit can--a trash can)

Military crest--that portion of a hill just below the topographical crest where full vision is possible.

C.O.--company commander.

Old man--the unit commander of a company size or over.

Exec--the executive officer of the unit.

Corps--the Marine Corps as a whole.

Swab--a mop (a swabby, a sailor)

A doggy--an Army soldier.

A zoomy--a pilot in the service.

P.X.--post exchange store.

Mainside--the main section of the base or town or country.

Top--a company first sergeant.

Ladder--a stairway.

Scuttlebutt--rumors or a drinking fountain.

Pogybait--candy, cookies, cold drinks, etc.

Railroad tracks--captains' bars.

Barman--man who carries a Browning Automatic Rifle.

S.T.P. or S.T.U.--special training unit or platoon.

Boot--bootcamp or a trainee.

Happy hour--the hour every Friday and Saturday nights at the clubs when beer is 5 cents a glass.

O.course--obstacle course used in training and conditioning.

The G.I.s--upset stomach and diarrhea caused by eating out of unclean mess gear.

D.I.--drill instructor, the hated sergeant in charge of training recruit platoons.

P.I.--Paris Island, South Carolina Marine Corps base.

Diego--San Diego, California Base, Camp Pendleton.

Civies--civilian clothes.

Police the Area--pick up all papers etc., and clean it up.

Suck ass or Kiss butt--a Marine who seeks to win favors from those of higher rank.

Rank--the width of a group of men in formation, or rating.

File--the depth of a group of men in formation.

Corpsman--medical man that cares for wounded.

B.A.M.--broad assed Marine, a woman Marine.

ComCo--Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Rack--bed.

Lore Peculiar to the
Marine Corps

Harassment: If there is any one thing a Marine will tell you about his stay in the Corps, it will be about the harassment he underwent while a recruit. Harassment in training has a purpose--it teaches the recruit to think and act without hesitation under the most confused and adverse of conditions. Harassment procedures are a fine art in the Marine Corps, perfected by years of training and experience. Traditional methods of harassment are passed on to young groups by the D.I.s in the form of the harassment itself; also, D.I.s get together to trade methods just as other groups trade stories. Here are a few stories of harassment from both personal experience and collection sources in the Corps.

W. C. Lacey, a corporal in the Marine Corps tells of the time his platoon was made to scrub the squad bay with tooth brushes and trim the lawn outside with small sewing scissors because they had failed to pass an inspection.

D. G. Cato, Sergeant, gave me a wealth of material on the harassment procedures he used as a D.I. "We used to play around the world. I'd get all my turds together with their foot lockers and take them outdoors. I'd then make them duck walk around the barracks holding the lockers in front of them. About every 50 yards I'd make them stop, give them a name of a town like Dallas, and tell them they'd need some article of clothing out of the locker in Dallas. I'd give them 15 seconds to unlock the lockers and take out the article I called for. If they didn't have the clothing in the locker, or if they couldn't get it out in time, I'd kick the shit out of two or three of the slow ones and we'd play until we had to do something else."

In every squad bay, there is a "shit can." This "shit can" is never used to put trash in, but is a "decorative piece." If this can isn't shined at

all times with metal polish and steel wool, the platoon is in for a bad time. I can remember one time when our can wasn't shined. We were taken out on the grinder and made to do rifle exercises (like weight lifting exercises using rifles instead of weights) until the last four men were left standing.

J.W. Jones, Sergeant, was also a D.I. He used to keep his platoon up after a hard day all night to watch for Santa Claus. He liked for his men to get all the sweets they wanted, so any time a mother sent her son a box of candy or cookies, he promptly made the recruit eat all the goodies, or until the recruit threw up. Another favorite form of harassment he used was to stand in the mess hall and make sure recruits "ate all of their chow." This meant prune pits, banana peels, and other gastric goodies.

Any time everyone hasn't been a good Marine, a little running is in order. Usually three miles before breakfast is sufficient to keep trainees in line.

In the Corps, cleanliness is certainly next to godliness. Personal hygiene is emphasized at all times. A Marine must shave every day. I heard a story of a man who was caught unshaven at inspection. The inspecting officer sent for cold water and a dull blade to remove the growth. I can remember an individual who didn't have time to shower before an inspection and was caught with loose hair from his weekly hair cut on his neck. The platoon was ordered to take the recruit in the shower and bathe him with heavy bristled scrub brushes. This procedure removed not only the dirt and loose hair, but also a great deal of skin.

Gunny Sergeant Fowler, a Negro D.I. who stood well over six feet tall, used to have a method of making his men remember left from right at drill. Any man who fouled up found Fowler stomping on his left foot, and saying "now you'll remember your left because that's the one that hurts." Another

famous Fowler stunt was the game of torpedo. He would line a group of maggots up against a wall and tell them they were torpedoes and that the squad bay across the way was a battleship. "Now you men are going to sink that ship." The recruits would then run at top speed against the squad bay bulkhead.

Yelling and screaming was always an effective form of harassment. The theory is to get the group into a situation which is confusing and takes a great deal of concentration then add to the impossibility of the situation by screaming and threatening them. It adds to the fun by occasionally hitting a turd or kicking him.

"Change the word" is a type of harassment the D.I.s are particularly fond of. The order to do something is passed, then just as the job is about half finished, the D.I. changes the order and gives his shit birds 30 seconds to get the mess squared away. Closely associated with this idea is the "get in, get out" play. From a position of attention in front of his rack, the recruit has 10 seconds to get out in the company area in platoon formation. If this is not done in the allotted time, the chore is practiced until all are able to do it well. This often means running up and down the ladder ten or twelve times.

Pissing, or even going to sleep, by the numbers is another form of harassment. On one, the trousers are opened, on two, the joint is in the hand, on three, you piss, on four, back in your trousers goes your joint and you run outside to make room for others. The third step is always the shortest count so there are quite a few wet legs.

A private Denton once told me of a man caught smoking, this is strictly against the rules in bootcamp. The D.I. told him he could smoke all he wanted to, whereupon he stuffed him in a shit can with five cigarets in his

mouth, put the lid on the can, and sat on the lid. When the recruit came out a pale green in color, the D.I. made him chew the filters.

Sand field days were always a barrel of laughs. The D.I. would send the platoon to the beach to get a bucket of sand, it goes without saying that the platoon would run down and back. Usually, it would take about five trips to get the "right kind" of sand. The sand would then be spread on the squad bay deck and everyone would get a brick to scrub with. Then the platoon would be given two minutes to get the sand up and start washing down the deck with water. This of course made a helluva mess to be cleaned up before bed time.

I collected this story of harassment from a private Reiner. He tells of the day his platoon's D.I. made them all climb up trees and yell as loud as possible, "I'm a shit bird."

Harassment has its purpose as does everything else in the Marine Corps. These are not just isolated cases of harassment. Harassment is a full-time proposition. It goes on in some form every waking hour of every day for the entire twelve-week training period. It is truly one of the biggest forms of folk lore in the Corps.

Traditions and Customs: The Marine Corps is steeped in tradition. Its one hundred and eighty-seven years has been filled with many bloody conquests from The Bonn Homme Richard to the frozen Chosin Reservoir. However, there doesn't seem to be much lore circulated on tradition and customs of the Corps. This is due in the main to the fact that most of the tradition and customs are taught in class rooms, therefore they are from written sources and never achieve the great measure of oral transmission found in other Marine lore. Aside from this fact, there are a few customs and traditions that find their way into drinking and bull sessions.

For example, every Marine over the rank of Lance Corporal, E-3 wears a red strip down his dress blue uniform's trousers leg. This strip is to commemorate the bloodshed of the Marine Corps during the Mexican War where in one battle over 75 per cent of the officers and noncommissioned officers were killed or wounded.

The quadrafoil, or the four leaf arrangement worn atop the officers' covers is said to be an evolution from The Revolutionary War days. During that war Marines were placed in the rigging of ships as snipers. When a boarding party went aboard the other ship, the men would mark their caps with large X's so that their fellow Marines in the rigging wouldn't mistake them for the enemy being fired upon.

A custom that is verbally kicked around quite a lot in the Corps is that of the Marine detachment on ship duty standing on the right of the Captain of the ship when welcoming others aboard or during ceremonies. It is claimed that this is only right since the Marine Corps is the oldest service in the United States. This argument is valid. The Marine Corps was written into existence on November 10, 1775, and the Navy one day later. Others say the reason for the custom is that the Corps has always fought the Navy's battles on land and has served so well on board ship that the Navy gives them the preferred position out of common courtesy.

Stories: I have broken the stories collected into two groups, tall tales and tales of heroes.

This story comes from a First Sergeant Rosenoff. He tells of hitting the beach on the Island of Pelilu in 1944, one of the bloodiest battles in the South Pacific campaign. "We got on the beach, those Nip bastards were throwing everything but monkey wrenches at us. We had been cut down to about half size, rounds were going off all around us, dust was flying, coral chunks and pieces of trees were falling everywhere, we couldn't see the Japs, they

were up in those friggin' caves, men were yelling so you couldn't hear shit. I remember one thing really clear. There was this spear chunker (Negro) in our outfit. He came crawling over pretty close to me and with a big shit-eatin' grin on his face says, Hey, Rosy, these mudder fucks are tryin' to kill me."

Staff Sergeant Jones tells of how the First Marine Division fought out of the Chosin Reservoir in the winter of 1950 while surrounded by twelve Chinese divisions. He claims, "We couldn't get drinking water and that we had froze at thirty below like it was, but we had a lot of whiskey and morphine. We'd get all hopped up and go Gook hunting. You could find the little bastards by watching for their smoke they made while they were cooking their fish and rice. You could always tell how close you were to them by smelling. When the fish smell got strong, you knew you were real close. A lot of times we'd come over a hill and find four or five of them eating around a fire. After the barman got through, there wouldn't be anything left but dirty dishes. We wiped out a whole Chink division like this;"

Gunny Sergeant Huffman told me this story. "When I was stationed at Fuji on Japan, there was this bar at mainside that had been taken over by a bunch of boogies (Negroes). They were a damn tough group of lads, they thought. One night they beat up an old supply sergeant just for kicks out in front of the bar. They hurt the old man pretty bad, so he went back to the supply bay, and directly, he came back with an anti-personnel grenade. He kicked open the front door pulled the pin and yelled, "see how you black sons-of-bitches like this game." With that he rolled the grenade down the middle of the floor and blew five of them and one Jap all to hell."

This story of harassment was passed on to me by a Corporal Cooper. It is not a tall tale and really should have been included under the section on

harassment, but it is too good to leave out. It seems that this certain private made gross error of calling his rifle a gun. He was told by his D.I. that he was very naughty to forget the name of his best friend in such a manner, so just so he wouldn't breach social propriety again, he would for the rest of the day walk around the company area with his rifle in one hand, and his joint in the other and recite this little poem--"this is my rifle, this is my gun; my rifle's for fighting, my gun is for fun." At the end of the day, the private was made to sleep on five rifles put in his rack by the D.I.

The Marine Corps is adamant about keeping all buttons buttoned at all times. If a recruit is found with a button undone, the D.I. asks, "do you want that button?" "Yes sir," replies the recruit, whereupon the D.I. pulls it off and hands it back to him. Corporal Lacey told me this story. "During an inspection at P.I. one day, a Major came around inspecting the troops. He stopped in front of a young private and screamed, "you'd better button that button." "Sir?" "I'm tellin' you lad, you'd better button that god dam button." The recruit looked down and still didn't see which button the Major had reference to. "I'm telling you just one more time to button that friggin' button." With this the recruit's eyes lite up as he reached across to button the button on the Major's pocket that the Major had somehow forgotten to secure. The Major marched off with his tail between his legs.

I have included this story in tall tales because you won't believe it anyway. When we arrived at Quantico, Virginia, our D.I. took us in the head. He got down on his knees in front of one of the toilets and washed his face in it. He then got up and said, "Now turds, if this toilet isn't clean enough for me to do this any time I want to, I'll have you in here washing your faces in it."

Lt. Bancroft told me a story of the D.I. he had who carried a swagger stick with him at all times. He was constantly taking the first squad leader into the head (the first squad leader usually is in charge of keeping the head squared away) and pointing out crud he found there with his swagger stick. He would then crack the squad leader a couple of times and ask, "What's that?" "That's crud, sir." The first squad leader, getting tired of this routine, and being a clown by nature, took some peanut butter from some field rations one morning and smeared it around on one of the immaculate toilet seats. When the D.I. came in, he asked, just as the squad leader knew he would, "What the hell is that?" With this cue, the squad leader touched his finger to the seat and put it in his mough. "Tastes like shit to me, sir."

There are hundreds of stories kicked around the Corps about heroes and wars. These stories are called gung-ho tales.

Lt. General Chesty Puller, a living legend in the Corps, won five Navy Crosses for his bravery plus literally hundreds of other metals. He never won the Medal of Honor. This fact upset him no end, so upon several occasions, he took it upon himself to win the highest metal for acts of bravery above and beyond the call of duty. One story claims that on Pelilu Island in 1944, Chesty, then a Colonel, had his jeep driver drive him up a hill under fire from a Jap pillbox. He was firing at the enemy with his service pistol over the windshield. The jeep was shot to pieces by enemy fire, but not until Puller had dispatched the pillbox with a hand grenade. He only got another Navy Cross for this act and was even more pissed off. "Chesty was a hard charger."

Smedley Butler, one of the past Commandants of the Corps, is another hero figure. He obtained his commission so the story goes at nineteen years

of age by personally approaching the Commandant of the Corps at the time in his office in Washington D. C. and talking the General into commissioning him. Smedley was so gung-ho that he had a giant Marine emblem tatooed on his chest. During the Boxer Rebellion in China, he was shot right through South America (the emblem has a globe with the Western Hemisphere showing). He lived and went on to fight in the rebellion. One story tells of a charge Smedley led up a hill on the Chinese enemy. A bullet hit him square between the eyes making that sound that comes only when a bullet hits a human skull. Everyone expected to see him fall. Instead, he pulled his cover over the hole in his forehead and kept charging. It was later discovered that the bullet had been a spent round from one of the antique rifles used by the Chinese at the time, and had therefore only broken the skin. However, some Marines still claim that Smedley only released that story to keep his men from worrying, and that Smedley was certainly tough enough to live through a little thing like being shot in the head.

A Lt. Munger told me this story. In Korea, there was a platoon dug in on top of this hill and told to hold the hill from the Reds. The next morning when a runner was sent up the hill, he found only one man left alive. The man was a private in rank and a barman. There were 300 dead Chinese piled up around the platoon's position. The private had only four rounds left in his automatic weapon. When he was asked why he hadn't left his position, he replied that he still had his knife, his entrenching tool, and ammunition boxes left to fight with if they (the Reds) came back.

John Basilone is considered the epitome of a good Marine. John was so rough, he even married a woman Marine. Basilone won The Medal of Honor twice. He was a machine gunner on New Britain Island. While holding a position a hill for some days, he and his men ran out of water. Dying of thirst, John slipped out of his hole at night and drank the blood of the dead Japanese

lying in front of his position. On another occasion, he killed two hundred Japs with his machine gun while they were crossing a river and was temporarily blinded in the fight. Basilone, it is said, was found dead on Iwo Jima during that battle with a Marine Corps knife in his back. No one knows whether a Jap got him or another Marine. John was so mean, he's bound to have made a lot of enemies in the Corps.

Songs: The songs sung in the Corps are usually marching songs. There are a few I collected that came from civilian sources into the service that are fairly unusual.

"Honey Babe" to the old tune of "Crawdad Hole," is a particular favorite. Verses are made up as the troops march along; however, there are some verses that are standards.

I gotta gal in every port, Honey, Honey,
I gotta gal in every port, Babe, Babe,
I gotta gal in every port, suing me for nonsupport,
Honey, Oh, Baby, mine.

I don't know, but I've been told, Honey, Honey,
Repeat, Babe, Babe,
I don't know, but I've been told, eskimoes' pussy's mighty cold,
Honey, Oh, Baby mine.

or;

I don't know but I've been told sergeant X has a paper ass hole.

I don't know, but it's been said, Honey, honey,
Repeat
I don't know, but it's been said, first platoon whacks off in bed.

Nickel in the drink machine, Honey, honey,
Repeat
Down the hatch and never stop, I'm going to drink until I drop.

Never saw a broad so large, Honey, honey,
Bigger than a landing barge, Babe, babe,
For kissing her they gave to me,
The silver star for bravery, Honey, Oh, Baby, mine.

Shine your boots and shine your brass, Honey, honey,
Repeat
Shine your boots and shine your brass, all they do is chew your ass--.

There was another song, or rather a chant, we used to sing while doing a double-time shuffle type conditioning exercise.

Hup / Ho Cindy Blue,
Cindy Blue how I love you.

Hup / Ho Cindy Red,
Cindy Red is good in bed.

Hup / Ho Cindy Black,
Cindy Black will break your back.

Hup / Ho Cindy Yellow,
Leaves her lipstick on my pillow.

Hup / Ho Cindy White,
Cindy White can fuck all night.

Hup / Ho Cindy Green,
Cindy Green's a fucking machine.

Hup / Ho Cindy Blue,
Cindy Blue is Marine Corps true.

The old theme of "Col. Drapper's Rapers" was often applied to our marching songs. One such song went:

We're Mr. Munger's raiders, we're on the prowl to night.
We're dirty sons of bitches, we'd rather fuck than fight.
So be careful all you women you'd better lock your doors,
'Cause Mr. Munger's raiders are on the prowl for whores.

"Tennessee" was another song we fitted to our own situation. I think I have recorded the tune for you on the small tape I cut for you about a month ago.

I was born in Tennessee, there my heart was young and free,
My father shoveled horse shit all the day;
Then one day when work was done, he found some diamonds in the dung,
And sent me off to join the 8th Marines.

Chorus:
Oh, it's hail, hail, hail the 8th Marines,
To hell with the field artillery,
Fuck the zoomies and the rest, we are undie Sammy's best,
We're the fucking, fightin', friggin' 8th Marines.

Walking down Canal Street beatin' on every door,
I'll be a son of a bitch if I could find a whore.

Chorus

When I finally found a whore, she asked me up to sin,
I'll be a son of a bitch if I could get it in.

Chorus

When I finally got it in, I wiggled it all about,
I'll be a son of a bitch if I could get it out.

Chorus

When I finally got it out, it was blue and sore,
I'll be a son of a bitch if I could fuck some more.

Chorus

We found a broken bottle, we found some broken glass,
We found a bunch of swabbies and shoved it up their ass.

I collected this song from a corporal from Oklahoma, the tune is also
on the tape I cut with you.

Down in the valley where the Red River flows,
Where cock suckers flourish, and whore mongers grow,
There I met Lupe the girl I adore,
She's my hot fuckin', cock suckin' Mexican whore.

Twas in Laredo, the moon shown above,
We met in a whore house and there fell in love,
I drank from her douche bowl whiskey and gin,
Climbed up in bed and I there stuck it in.

The first time I saw her a virgin of eight,
As a child she would swing on the old garden gate,
Then the bracing pole broke and the upright went in,
And she's lived all her life in the shackles of sin.

She's dirty and nasty, she'll nibble your nuts,
If you don't watch her, she'll suck out your guts,
She'll fuck for a dollar, take less or take more,
My hot fuckin', cock suckin', Mexican whore.

The last time I saw her was late in the fall,
She was dancing a whing-ding at the cock-sucker's ball,
With a gleam in her eye and a smile on her lips,
She was fanning her pussy and flopping her tits.

Now she is dead and laid in her tomb,
The maggots crawl out of her decomposed womb,
And the smile on her face seems to say "give me more,"
My hot fuckin', cock suckin', Mexican whore.

I collected this toast from a Negro recruit who used it as a pastime
medium while marching.

Back in '32 when times were hard,
 I had a 38 pistol and a marked deck of cards,
 A ragged old coat and a battered up hat,
 A T-model Ford, no payments on that.
 My sweet little woman kicked me out in the cold,
 'Asked her why, 'Said your love's done grown old.
 Took a walk down Rampart Street,
 When a knocked out whore I chanced to meet.
 Walked through the rain, walked through the mud,
 Walked in a saloon called the Bucket of Blood.
 Said, hey, bar tender give me something to eat,
 Gave me a raunchy glass of water and a scroungy piece of meat.
 Said, say, bar tender, do you know who I am,
 He said frankly mother fucker, I don't give a damn.
 Just when he thought he was getting the best,
 I put four big holes in that bastard's chest.
 A bitch jumped up and yelled, Stack, Stack, you can't be dead,
 Hell no bitch, I'm still alive, but look at the holes in that mother's
 head.
 She looked at her watch said a quarter to eight,
 Come up stairs and I'll set you straight.
 I went upstairs and started to fuck,
 Pushing my dick like a 10 ton truck.
 I fucked on the ceiling and fucked on the floor,
 Said your a good fuckin' mama, let's fuck some more.
 I grabbed for her tits, I grabbed for her hairs,
 I heard some bastard come up them stairs.
 Just as I had him in those 38's some dumb mother fucker done
 switched on the lights.
 Shot that bastard right through the head,
 Caught my balls on the springs of the bed.
 Gave a yell, gave a buck, she said you a mean mother fucker,
 but you sure can fuck.
 Next day I stood before a jury of twelve good men,
 They said say judge man what will the vertic be,
 He said murder in the first degree.
 The men said shot him, hang him, give him gas,
 Run 'lectricity up his ass.
 The foreman said hangin's too good for you,
 You fucked my wife back in 22.
 Another said, I'll get my .44,
 He fucked my wife back in 24.
 The judge said 99 years is your time.
 I said hell judge, that's no time. I've got a brother that's
 served 99. You think it's shit and all that jive,
 But that mean mother fucker is still alive.

Jokes: The joking tradition is practically the same in the Corps as it
 is in civilian life. Since I have heard thousands of jokes in the Corps, I
 have limited the jokes in this paper to those directly concerned with the
 Marine Corps' activity.

This joke comes from Major Hertling, an old salt in the Corps. He was a fine officer and a helluva good man.

There were two young Marines right out of bootcamp. They were standing on a corner in their dress blues.

An old lady approached and asked, "Aren't you young men what they call Marines?"

"Fuckin' Aye, lady," answered one of them.

The other, very embarrassed, said, "You'll have to excuse my buddy, lady, he just don't know how to talk to a cunt."

I collected this joke from a sergeant; I don't remember his name.

A young recruit fresh out of boot went home on leave.

While at the table he forgot where he was and asked his mother to, "pass the god damn potatoes." His mother was very hurt to think her son had sunk so low and gave him a good lecture.

The next day the lad again asked for the "god damn" potatoes.

Another lecture ensued.

The next day, trying very hard, the Marine asked for the potatoes with such refinement and was so proud of himself that he turned to his family and said smartly, "I remembered this time, you thought I'd fuck up again, didn't you?"

One of my cohorts told this joke he had heard from some source in the Marine Corps.

A waitress in a restaurant was once serving a young Marine and his female companion. After the couple were through eating, the waitress asked if they'd be interested in some of the house's special apple pie. The young Marine replied, "get out of here you dumb cunt, if I'd wanted any of that shit, I'd have asked you for it." The waitress, very upset, saw a Marine colonel sitting in a nearby booth. She asked the colonel for his assistance and they both approached the young Marine's table. She again asked if the couple wanted any apple pie; again she received the same answer. "Get out of here, cunt, if I'd wanted any of that shit, I'd have asked you for it." What do you think about that, colonel," she asked. "Well, if he don't want any of that shit, fuck him, don't give him any," came the answer.

Proverbs and Riddles: Both of these forms of folk lore are found to a very limited degree in the Corps. The only proverbs in the Corps are those brought into the service from civilian life. I can't remember hearing one riddle while in the Corps except the perverted type riddles that are so popular in civilian life.

Why do elephants have flat left feet?

Because of jumping out of all those trees.

(don't ask me--I don't understand either)

What is black and comes in a white box?
Sammy Davis Jr.

What's grey and comes in quarts?
Elephants.

What has two tits, fourteen balls and goes whistling through the woods?
Snow White and the seven dwarfs.

What has 20 thousand legs, two cherries, and flies?
Ten thousand air line stewardesses.

What's the busiest thing in the world?
A two-bit whore on a Marine base.

What's black, runs through the grass, and catches flies?
Willie Mays.

Proverbs:

That's harder than a D.I.'s heart.

You're as full of shit as a Christmas turkey.

You're as soft as Nelly's tit.

Move like a fart in a hot skillet.

Move like a mad woman's shit.

Busy as a cat covering up shit on a cement porch.

Lower than whale shit, or so low he'd have to stand up to look a snake
in the ass, or he could sit on a cigaret paper and dangle his feet.

Tougher than a boot, a wood hauler's ass, Marine-Corps biscuits.

Bleeding like a whore on her day off.

Ragged as a can of kraut.

Looks like a can of C-ration ass holes.

Tastes like smashed ass holes.

Looks like hammered shit.

Drunker than a fiddler's bitch.

Hotter than a two-petered owl, or a two-dollar pistol.

Games: Most of the games played in the Marine Corps are designed to either harass troops or let off steam.

Organized Grab Ass was a Sunday afternoon pastime. There were many kinds of team games played, all of them pretty damned rough.

Tug-o-war was played with a ship's cable, a platoon on each team. To add spice, the game was played over a mud hole.

Another team game was played by setting up lines about a hundred yards apart. The object was to pull the opposing team members across your lines in any manner you wanted to use. Slugging, kicking, and kneeling were the order of the day.

There was one game played emphasizing group participation to the utmost. Two platoons were lined up on opposite sides of a trench about waist deep with mud and water. A volley ball was then thrown in and the platoon that came out the other side of the trench with the ball won some special favor from its D.I.

Arm wrestling was a favorite game played in the squad bay on rainy days.

Spit and Beat it Down was a lot of fun also. In this game, the platoon was taken up on a water tower or a high platform, then one by one each man spit over the side and tried to beat it to the ground. This game was designed to build reflexes and to tone up muscles.

Boasts: There is a lot of boasting and many, many routines, and smart replies going around in the Corps.

From the Oklahoma corporal I got:

"I'm a fucker, a fighter, a wild bull rider, a windmill fixer, a hay bailer, and a pretty fair tent maker."

"I'll jump back across the track, find something black, I can fuck till midnight, fight till daylight and never eat a god dam bite."

Our D.I. used to tell us, "Sell the shit house, boys, you're ass is all mine." Another of his boasts or threats was, "I'm going to grab you by your stacking swivel, lad." or "I'll stick that rifle up your ass and turn it sideways."

Captain Mason's favorite was, "I'll piss in your mess gear or I'll grab your testes with such strength and fury, it will cause you to cry out in mortal pain ouch, and more than once."

A Marine from South Carolina once boasted, "I was raised in a canebreak by an old mama bear, got two sets of "I" teeth and six coats of hair. Got 9 pounds of balls and a roll-steel rod, I'm a mean mother fucker, I'm a rebel by God."

A lieutenant once told me he was going to cram me so far down into my steel helmet that I'd look like a turtle walking on my balls.

A friend of mine was once told by his D.I., "I'm going to take this grenade, stick it up your ass and pull the pin."

"I'm lean, mean and don't make no mistakes," was a favorite brag of the same Oklahoma corporal.

Routines: These routines are commonplace in any squad bay.

You'd fuck your own grandmother and bitch about flabby pussy.

Now, you shouldn't talk like that after the way I took up for you.

How's that?

Well, when I heard someone say you kissed the Co's ass and howled at the moon, I told them you did not! You've never howled at the moon.

I'm going to quit giving you any if you don't quit telling everyone my dick is salty.

Oh yeh, it's funny to me that you have the only pistol-grip ears on the base.

Well, it's funny to me that you're known as cum tongue everywhere you go.

Smart Sayings: There is a wealth of these in the Corps.

A B.A.M. sergeant was heard to say to her troops at drill one day, "there's five miles of dick on this base, if you people don't square away, you won't get an inch of it this week end."

Another woman Marine sergeant is reputed to have said, "When I say Forward March, I don't want to hear anything but 40 pussies sucking wind."

You're so dumb, you thing ping-pong balls is Jap V.D. This came from two Marines in conversation.

If you're so god dam smart, why ain't you Commandant?

I hope to piss in your mess gear.

Wham, bam, god dam, son of a bitch I am.
Sixty-nine, Christ a mighty, boo, rah, shit.

I never called you a son of a bitch,
I may have said you were a one-lunged, cock sucking, baby raping, arm
pit smelling mother fucker, but you're not a son of a bitch.

You've had the cock, buster.

Screw off, Mac.

I hope to kiss a fat baby's ass.

You tell 'em doughnut, you've got a greasy hole.

You tell 'em cigar, your butt's been chewed.

You tell 'em pool table, your ball's are racked.

What are you doing out there, smoking cedar bark and jacking off?
Why don't you go play stink finger down at the B.A.M. barracks?

Why don't you jump up and bite my ass.

Why don't you French kiss my ass.

Beer for my men and water for my horses. This is used anytime one walks into a bar.

Fuck me dead!

Eat me like an onion, raw.

If you had a little more sense, you'd be stupid.

Quit jumping around like a corn-holed chicken.

If bull shit was music, you'd have a brass band playing for you all the time.

Get through that hatchway, I don't want to see anything but ankles and ass holes moving.

Don't blow any dogs. (This is a farewell expression.)

You're so dumb that if a woman offered you some, you'd probably stand her against the wall and throw baseballs at it.

Does your mother know you're queer?

Why don't you go eat a shit sandwich?

Have you ever tasted a sweeter dick than mine?

Why don't you go play in front of the tanks?

Why don't you volunteer to pull targets down on the flame-thrower range?

Notes on Collection of Lore: All of this lore has been collected within the last five years, however, I have gotten almost the same material from Marines who got out of the Corps right after the last war. This lore is constant in the Corps, and is passed on from one generation of Marines to another. It is interesting to collect this lore because it is varied, humorous, and conforms very nicely to the patterns of civilian lore. There is a wealth of lore in the service, as yet, not even tapped. It is far beyond the scope of this paper to record even a small portion of it.

BOASTS

by Don Higginbotham

This boast was collected this summer from a construction worker.

"I'm goin' to romp, stomp, kick down doors,
Fuck them women called nasty-assed whores.
'Cause I'm a peter-packin' papa from Texas way.
I fuck'em neater, sweeter, and with lot more peter,
Than any other poppa in the whole U.S.A."

From an 18 year old Negro boy I found this brag.
"I'm young, dumb, and full of cum; don't ever get enough of nothin'."

An old steel worker quite black in color boasted:
"I was Baptized in a barrel of butcher knives, cut my teeth on a .45,
I measure 52 inches across the chest, ain't afraid of nothin' but the
good Lord and a redheaded woman."

An Oklahoma boy used to claim:
"I'm a fucker, a fighter and a wild bull rider, a windmill fixer, a
hay bailer, and a pretty fair tent maker."

From the same source came this brag:
"I'll jump back across the track, find something black; I can fuck till
midnight and fight till daylight and never eat a god dam bite."

The original version of the now Bo Diddly song "Who Do You Love?" seems
to have been a boast. I collected a very similar version from a Negro
in Waco who had never heard the song.

"I've got a tombstone hand and a cemetary mind,
just turned twenty-two and I don't mind dying."

I have collected a series of short boasts most of which deal with sexual
prowess of one sort or another. Nearly all of these boasts I heard from my
associates either on the job or in the Marine Corps, and practically all of
them were heard during the last five years.

I can line a hundred women up against a wall. I'll bet \$50. I can fuck
them all. I'll fuck 98 till my dick turns blue, then back off, jack off and
fuck the other two.

I got up a hard like a pack mule, throbbin' like a mocking bird without
enough skin left to close my eyes.

I'm tough and lean and loaded with hair, I can fuck a porcupine or a
grizzly bear. 'Got 9 pounds of balls and a roll-steel rod, I'm a mean mother
fucker, I'm a rebel by God.

My pecker's so long that when the jersey heifer sees me coming, she runs
and hides.

I'm so handsome that a woman would eat a bucket of my shit just to get
to see where it came from.

I'm such a good lover that women would crawl 50 miles over broken beer bottles just to sniff the wagon tracks that carried my drawers to the laundry.

I may not can long dick you baby, but I can sure as hell fancy fuck you.

Honey I'll give three threes so fast you'll think it's nine.

I'd take a piece of that with her old man chopping on my ass with a double-bitted axe.

My favorite boasts are those of physical prowess. In this section, I've included smart sayings of the boastful nature.

I'll hit you so hard that it'll knock the dust off your brogans.

Did you ever try to walk around with one of your eyes dangling on a little string?

I'm lean and mean and don't make no mistakes.

I may not be the meanest man around, but I'll do until one comes along.

I can't keep you from coming, but I can make you limp going back.

I can't keep you from doing that but I can sure as hell break you of the habit.

I'll hit you so hard it'll shake your relatives in the Congo.

I'll knock you colder than last weeks' eggs.

Where I come from, things are so tough that I saw a 12 year old girl throw her left tit over her right shoulder and squirt buttermilk up her butt.

Where I come from I've seen a grasshopper stand flatfooted and fuck a cow.

I'm so tough I can eat saw dust and shit two by fours.

I can eat nails and shit log chains.

I'll kick your ass so hard that you'll have to unbutton your shirt to shit, or take off your hat to wipe.

I'll fill you so full of holes you'll have to stand in the bathtub to piss.

I'll run my hand down your throat, grab you by the ass hold and turn you wrong side out.

I'm so fast that my pockets scoop gravel every time I turn a corner.

I can move like a fart in a hot skillet.

I'll get in your eyes like onions.

I'll do a tap dance on your forehead.

I've only been wrong one time--that's the time I thought I was wrong but I was right.

ANOTHER FINE COLLECTION OF FILTH

by Don Higginbotham

Note: Please remember this extra work while averaging final grades. (That's a joke see, son?)

In the summertime, in the summertime, in the summertime so warm,

There once was a lady who lay in the grass.

She slowly turned over to show me her ---

Diamonds and rubies and little ducks,

And promised to teach me a new way to ---

Raise up my children and ^{teach} ~~them~~ them to knit,

The boys in the barnyard are shoveling ---

Hay to the cows and the horses and little Nell,

If you don't like my story you can to straight to ---

Helen had a steam boat the steam boat had a bell,

When Helen went to heaven, the steam boat went to ---

Pepsi and Ginger Ale 10 cents a glass, if you don't like my

story you kiss my rusty ---

Ask me no questions, I'll tell you no lies

If you ever get hit by a bucket of shit

don't forget to close your eyes.

This is a little rhyme we used to chant when we were about 12 years old.